



UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY

REGION VIII

999 18th STREET - SUITE 500  
DENVER, COLORADO 80202-2466

19960324

SEP 13 1996

Ref: 8EPR-EP

Mr. Burt Kulesza  
Forest Supervisor  
Ashley National Forest  
355 N. Vernal Ave.  
Vernal, UT 84078

Re: Draft Environmental Impact  
Statement for Management of the  
High Uintas Wilderness

Dear Mr. Kulesza:

In accordance with our responsibilities under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and Section 309 of the Clean Air Act, the Region VIII Office of the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has reviewed the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) for the subject project. We offer the following comments for your consideration.

We commend the Ashley and Wasatch-Cache National Forests for their mutual concerns of the condition and use of the High Uintas Wilderness and the need to amend current direction in the existing Forest Plans. The EPA agrees that evaluating existing monitoring results and the application of the Limits of Acceptable Change (LAC) planning process will aid the Forests in defining those desired conditions to be maintained or restored in the wilderness.

The EPA believes that selection and implementation of Alternative 1, the Forests preferred alternative, as the proposed action meets the stated purpose and need.

Based on the procedures the EPA uses to evaluate the environmental impacts of the proposed action and alternatives and the adequacy of information provided, the EPA Region VIII rates the draft EIS as category LO (Lack of Objections). A summary of the EPA's rating definitions is attached for reference.



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The EPA appreciates the opportunity to review and comment on the draft EIS. If you have any questions, please contact Mike Hammer of my staff at (303) 312-6563.

Sincerely,

*Carol L. Campbell*

Carol L. Campbell, Director  
Ecosystems Protection Program

cc: Elaine Suriano, OFA EPA-HQ

SUMMARY OF RATING DEFINITIONS  
AND FOLLOW-UP ACTION\*Environmental Impact of the Action**LO--Lack of Objections**

The EPA review has not identified any potential environmental impacts requiring substantive changes to the proposal. The review may have disclosed opportunities for application of mitigation measures that could be accomplished with no more than minor changes to the proposal.

**EC--Environmental Concerns**

The EPA review has identified environmental impacts that should be avoided in order to fully protect the environment. Corrective measures may require changes to the preferred alternative or application of mitigation measures that can reduce the environmental impact. EPA would like to work with the lead agency to reduce these impacts.

**EO--Environmental Objections**

The EPA review has identified significant environmental impacts that must be avoided in order to provide adequate protection for the environment. Corrective measures may require substantial changes to the preferred alternative or consideration of some other project alternative (including the no action alternative or a new alternative). EPA intends to work with the lead agency to reduce these impacts.

**EU--Environmentally Unsatisfactory**

The EPA review has identified adverse environmental impacts that are of sufficient magnitude that they are unsatisfactory from the standpoint of public health or welfare or environmental quality. EPA intends to work with the lead agency to reduce these impacts. If the potential unsatisfactory impacts are not corrected at the final EIS stage, this proposal will be recommended for referral to the CEQ.

Adequacy of the Impact Statement**Category 1--Adequate**

EPA believes the draft EIS adequately sets forth the environmental impact(s) of the preferred alternative and those of the alternatives reasonably available to the project or action. No further analysis or data collection is necessary, but the reviewer may suggest the addition of clarifying language or information.

**Category 2--Insufficient Information**

The draft EIS does not contain sufficient information for EPA to fully assess environmental impacts that should be avoided in order to fully protect the environment, or the EPA reviewer has identified new reasonably available alternatives that are within the spectrum of alternatives analyzed in the draft EIS, which could reduce the environmental impacts of the action. The identified additional information, data, analyses, or discussion should be included in the final EIS.

**Category 3--Inadequate**

EPA does not believe that the draft EIS adequately assesses potentially significant environmental impacts of the action, or the EPA reviewer has identified new, reasonably available alternatives that are outside of the spectrum of alternatives analyzed in the draft EIS, which should be analyzed in order to reduce the potentially significant environmental impacts. EPA believes that the identified additional information, data, analyses, or discussions are of such a magnitude that they should have full public review at a draft stage. EPA does not believe that the draft EIS is adequate for the purposes of the NEPA and/or Section 109 review, and thus should be formally revised and made available for public comment in a supplemental or revised draft EIS. On the basis of the potential significant impacts involved, this proposal could be a candidate for referral to the CEQ.

\*From EPA Manual 1640 Policy and Procedures for the Review of Federal Actions Impacting the Environment.